



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

INTERNATIONAL COCAINE TRAFFICKING RING DISMANTLED **-- Four Canadian Suspects Arrested in Spain; 1,000 Kilograms of Cocaine Seized --**

MADRID, SPAIN – Special agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), working in collaboration with officials from Spain's Guardia Civil and Canada's Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), have dismantled an international drug trafficking ring that was attempting to smuggle 1,000 kilograms of cocaine into Spain for later distribution throughout the European Union.

The investigation began in May 2005 when ICE and DEA agents learned that a drug trafficking organization led by individuals of Canadian origin was attempting to transport 1,000 kilograms of cocaine from the Caribbean to Spain. Because of the nationalities of those involved and because one of these individuals was considered the largest drug trafficker in Canada, ICE and DEA agents requested the help of Canadian authorities to begin coordinating their investigation.

In August of this year, after it was confirmed that the destination of the cocaine shipment was Spain, U.S. and Canadian authorities contacted Spain's Guardia Civil in order to work together in the investigation.

In late September, the Guardia Civil detected members of the drug trafficking organization in town of Rosas, in the province of Gerona, Spain. With the assistance of U.S. and Canadian authorities, Spanish officials learned that other members of the organization would be arriving in Spain from Canada in early October. Members of the organization were being closely monitored in both Canada and Spain.

The take-down of the investigation began on October 6 in the locality of Cambrils (Tarragona) Spain, where members of the organization that had traveled to Spain were detained as they attempted to move the cocaine from one place to another. Authorities also detained the leader of the organization who had traveled to Spain in order to coordinate both the sale of the drugs and the laundering of the proceeds from those sales.

From the analysis of the documentation seized by authorities, it was learned that this organization operated not only in Spain, but also in Holland, France, The United Kingdom, and Ireland, as well as in the United States and Canada.

In total, the investigation has resulted in the detention in Spain of four Canadian nationals. The investigation has also resulted in the seizure of 1,000 kilograms of cocaine; several high-performance vehicles; the latest high-technology computer equipment, as well as a great deal of documentation and cash.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). ICE seeks to prevent acts of terrorism by targeting the people, money, and materials that support terror and criminal networks.